

CHAPTER XXII

THE "STEAM ROLLER" CONVENTION OF 1912

THE contests in the primaries for the election of delegates to the National Republican Convention became extremely animated after Roosevelt's consent to be a candidate was made known. With characteristic frankness and courage he stood by his principles without flinching. On March 20, 1912, he made a speech in Carnegie Hall, New York, when he declared "I stand by my Columbus speech," and reiterated the views he had expressed in it, taking occasion to reply at some length to the criticisms which President Taft had made of his remarks on the question of the recall of judicial decisions. In this speech he quoted an approval of his recall plan which had been given by William Draper Lewis, Dean of the Law School of the University of Pennsylvania, and in which the Dean had said:

"I don't mind saying, however, that I think it unfortunate that it should have been proposed by Colonel Roosevelt. He is a man of such marked characteristics, and his place in the political world is such that he arouses intense enthusiasm on the one hand, and intense animosity on the other. Because of this, the great idea which he has propounded is bound to be beclouded, and its adoption to be delayed. It is a pity that anything so important should be confounded with any man's personality."⁵

Commenting upon this, Roosevelt said:

"As regards the Dean's last paragraph, I

can only say
that I wish somebody else whose suggestions
would arouse
less antagonism *had* proposed it; but nobody
else *did* pro-
pose it, and so I *Jiad* to. I am not leading this
fight as a